

REMARKS

Claims 1-21 are currently pending. Applicants believe claims 1-4, 8, and 10-13 are rejected. With respect to claim 8, the summary shows it rejected but the detailed action is silent. Claims 5-7 and 14-18 are objected to. Claims 9 and 19-21 are allowed. Claims 22-42 were canceled.

Elections / Restrictions

Applicants confirm the election without traverse of Claims 1-21. On October 4, 2004, a telephonic interview was conducted between the Examiner and Christopher Dremann in which agreement with respect to the claims was reached. Specifically, group I (Claims 1-21) was elected for prosecution.

Claim Objections / Rejections

Claims 1-4, and 10-13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Giebel et al. (US 5,863,083) (Giebel). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Claim 1 recites *inter alia* "a pulling grip sleeve comprising a bag that is longitudinally openable to position the pulling grip sleeve over the pulling grip housing and the furcation plug, and to be closed around the pulling grip housing and the furcation plug to install the fiber optic cable". Giebel is silent with respect to a bag that is longitudinally openable. It is respectfully submitted that a *prima facie* case of obviousness has not been made. Specifically, the prior art reference must teach or suggest all the claim limitations. Additionally, the teaching or suggestion to make the claimed combination and the reasonable expectation of success must both be found in the prior art and not based on applicant's disclosure. *See In re Vaeck*, 947 F.2d 488 and MPEP 706.02(j). Applicants respectfully submit that there is no teaching or suggestion in Giebel for a "a pulling grip sleeve comprising a bag that is longitudinally openable to position the pulling grip sleeve over the pulling grip housing and the furcation plug, and to be closed around the pulling grip housing and the furcation plug to install the fiber optic cable".

Accordingly, Claim 1 is submitted to be patentable over the cited art. Claims 2-3 depend from patentable base Claim 1, and thus, are likewise allowable for at least the same reasons.

With respect to independent Claims 4 and 10, Geibel does not describe or suggest a second housing portion defining a plurality of pockets, wherein each pocket is for storing a plurality of the fiber optic connectors. Rather, Geibel describes slots (42) which are clearly shown as each housing only a single connector (20). Contrary to the assertion in the Office Action that "Geibel teaches (column 6 lines 9-15) teaches (sic) the slot may be of any shape and any number of different connectors can be used", column 6 lines 9-15 recite "In other words, the slots are preferably angled to minimize bending of the optical fibers and to increase the number of connectors which may be accommodated in a housing of a given length and diameter. Although rectangular slots are illustrated, the slots defined by the second portion can have various shapes in order to receive and temporarily retain the various types of optical fiber connectors."

Accordingly, Claims 4 and 10 are submitted to be patentable over the cited art. Claims 11-13 depend from patentable base Claim 10, and thus, are likewise allowable for at least the same reasons.

For at least the reasons above, Applicants respectfully request that the 102 rejection of Claims 1-4, and 10-13 be withdrawn.

Claims 5-7 and 14-18 were objected to as being dependent on a rejected base claim. Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 5-7 depend from independent Claim 4 which is submitted to be patentable, and Claims 14-18 depend from independent Claim 10 which is submitted to be patentable. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the objection to Claims 5-7 and 14-18 be withdrawn.

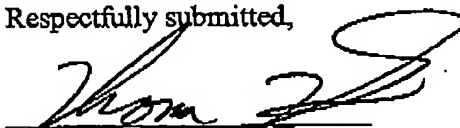
Claim 8 was listed as rejected in the summary but not in the detailed action. Applicants respectfully submit that claim 8 is patentable over the cited art. More specifically, none of the cited art describes or suggests "wherein the furcation plug comprises means for integrating the furcation plug with conventional communications hardware".

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and these remarks, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to withdraw the objection(s) and the rejection(s) of the claims and to reconsider the application. This Amendment is fully responsive to the Office Action dated February 9, 2005 and places the application in condition for immediate allowance. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to issue a Notice of Allowability for the pending claims. Applicants encourage the Examiner to contact the undersigned directly to further the prosecution of any remaining issues, and thereby expedite allowance of the application.

This Amendment does not result in more independent or total claims than paid for previously. Accordingly, no fee for excess claims is believed to be due. The Examiner is hereby authorized to charge any fee due in connection with the filing of this response, including any excess claims fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-2167. A one month extension of time from May 9, 2005 up to and including June 9, 2005 is hereby requested. Please charge Deposit Account No. 19-2167 the one month extension fee. If a fee is required for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 not already accounted for, such an extension is requested and the fee should likewise be charged to Deposit Account No. 19-2167. Any overpayment should be credited to Deposit Account No. 19-2167.

Respectfully submitted,



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Dated: 5-20-05